

THE INFORMER

DDK FELLOWS NEWSLETTER

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DIABETES AND DIGESTIVE AND KIDNEY DISEASES

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The Fellows Advisory Board (FAB) in collaboration with the NIDDK Fellowship Office has started a monthly newsletter to announce events and news. If you would like to help write articles for the newsletter or have any questions or comments regarding the newsletter or FAB, please contact:

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Life Beyond NIDDK – A Career Interview with a Former Fellow

by Chithra Keembiyehetty

For all fellows contemplating the ever important question of what they plan to do when they finish their fellowship at the NIH, this column, which features interviews of former NIDDK fellows and highlights how they arrived in their current career positions, is a must read. Nominations of former fellows are always welcome. Please send their name and contact information to the newsletter. This month's featured fellow is Brooke Lazarus. She is currently working as a 'Regulatory Affairs Officer' for an Australian pharmaceutical company.

Informer: Tell us about your graduate and postdoctoral background:

Brooke Lazarus: I did my graduate work in Australia

at the Austin Research Institute. The lab I worked in was primarily focused on Xenotransplantation, but specialized in glycosyltransferases. So the main focus was trying to find a way to get rid of cell surface glycoproteins such as Gal, alpha1,3Gal to achieve successful xenotransplantation. My role in the lab was to characterize a number of glycosyltransferases and it was something I was really interested in, however I was not so interested in the xeno angle. So, when it came to choosing a post doc lab, I was very excited to be offered a position with Dr. John Hanover, who also specialized in one particular glycosyltransferase (OGT), but was a much more cell biology/biochemistry



Brooke Lazarus, a former NIDDK fellow.

focused. I was with Dr. Hanover for five great years where I looked at the role of OGT in diabetes and neurodegeneration and got to learn a lot about C.elegans. Something I never thought I would have ended up doing. It was a great experience and one I wouldn't change for the world.

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Welcome from the Editor

by Lystranne Maynard

Dear Fellows,

I am very excited to have this opportunity to act as the new Editor-in-Chief of the Informer. I hope that I can bring some new and exciting ideas to the newsletter. I am very fortunate that I can step into a well-oiled machine that is the Informer, thanks to Anna Burkart and Nick

Noinaj. I am looking forward to hearing any new ideas for feature or recurring articles that you think would well serve our Fellows community. Writers are always welcome!

Please feel free to drop me a line with any suggestions you may have. Writing for the newsletter is an excellent way to serve your

NIH/NDDK community. I plan to maintain the high standard that has been set by the former editors, and hope to showcase some fresh ideas throughout the year.

Here is looking forward to a great 2010!

Your new Editor-in-Chief
Lystranne Maynard

Life Beyond NIDDK, continued from page 1

Informer: Can you describe briefly your current job?

Brooke Lazarus: My current job is back in Australia and I work as a Regulatory Affairs Officer for an Australian pharmaceutical company. The product I work on is Influenza Vaccine. As a Regulatory Affairs Officer, I liaise with a lot of different groups and people within my company that are involved with manufacturing of the vaccine, quality assurance, validation, innovation and clinical, as we are currently performing clinical trials on the vaccine. I help to product with FDA by preparing and submitting the relevant documentation required by the Agency, as well as advise other groups within the company about the expectations of the Agency with regard to the product. It is an extremely challenging position, but very rewarding.

Informer: Is your current position what you expected to be like?

Brooke Lazarus: To be honest, I don't think I could ever have really known what my job would be like until I jumped in with both feet, which is a bit scary. The learning curve since I started has been very steep and I am not sure when it will taper off. This is the type of job where you are always learning and it is always changing. It is very dependent on the product

you work on, the stage of product development and any changes that need to be made to the manufacturing process for that product. It is a very challenging job, but certainly never boring. I knew there would be a big writing component to this job, which is one of the reasons I wanted to do it, but even I couldn't have guessed just how much writing there would be. The amount of paperwork can sometimes be quite daunting, but I love it.

Informer: If your job is not in the traditional career pathway (academia or industry), why did you decide to leave research and pursue your current career?

Brooke Lazarus: My new job is definitely not on the typical career path for a research scientist. Some would consider leaving science for pharmaceuticals as selling your soul to the devil. However I certainly haven't felt that way. I decided to leave research because I wanted a job that was more stable and where I could feel like I was achieving my goals. I felt as a scientist that the goals were often so fuzzy and so far in the distance that you would lose sight of the bigger picture. I wanted to feel like at the end of each week that I had achieved what I set out to do. I also didn't want to have to spend the rest of my career writing

grants to justify my existence. I think being a research scientist is a great and noble career, but unfortunately it was not for me.

Informer: Can you provide some advice to current postdocs, i.e. skills and experience required for your current position?

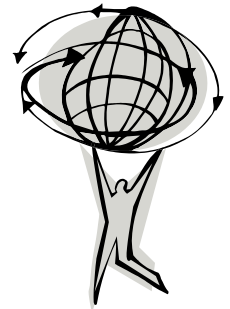
Brooke Lazarus: To get into a job in Regulatory affairs, you don't necessarily need to do any courses. Unfortunately it's just trying to find an opening and get your foot in the door. All Regulatory Affairs positions will require you to have either a science or pharmacy background and it will just be up to you to prove that you have the type of personality for the role. A Regulatory Affairs Officer or Associate has to have extremely good time management, exceptional writing skills, be very organized, have a very keen eye for detail and be able to multi-task. If you do not have these skills, then this is definitely not the job for you.

Informer: Would you mind current postdocs contacting you to ask for further information?

Brooke Lazarus: Of course not. My email address is brookelazarus@gmail.com



Register for the NIDDK Fellows' Scientific Retreat



REGISTRATION OPEN FOR 5th Annual Fellows RETREAT for 2010.

- Register now and submit abstract later (before February 1st deadline).
- No cost to you: Fellowship office assumes ALL travel cost!
- Mix and mingle with exciting speakers and both current and former fellows in a beautiful resort setting.

The 5th Annual NIDDK Fellows Scientific Retreat will be held at the Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay on March 24-26, 2010. Deadline for registration and abstract submission is February 1, 2010 and can be found at: <http://fellowshipoffice.niddk.nih.gov/retreat/>.
(Photo courtesy of Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay Golf Resort, Spa, and Marina)

Extramural Review Branch Internships for NIDDK Fellows

Training in Scientific Review and Research Analysis,
Opportunities for Research & Resume Enhancement;
Develop Marketable Skills;
Expand your Networking Contacts and Program Management.

Applicants should contact: **Dr. Louis Simchowicz, Director of the Fellowship Office** for more information

Nancy Nossal Awards

The Nancy Nossal Award is open to all Postdoctoral & Clinical Fellows. Details regarding eligibility, application requirements, and a list of previous award recipients are provided on the program website:

<http://fellowshipoffice.niddk.nih.gov/audience/fellowship-award.shtml>

The next application deadline is Monday, March 1, 2010.

Upcoming Social Events:

Wednesday January 20th: FelCom Happy Hour at BlackFinn from 6 to 10 pm.

For more information about social events contact Aurora Fountainhas:

fountainhasa@niddk.nih.gov

FelCom/GSC Holiday Party by Chaya Pooput

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We're on the Web!

NIDDK Fellowship Office:

<http://fellowshipoffice.nidk.nih.gov>

NIDDK Informer Newsletter:

<http://fellowshipoffice.nidk.nih.gov/newsletter>

With the support of FAES, FelCom and the Graduate Student Council organized again a joint Holiday Party on Wednesday December 9th from 6-11 PM at the FAES House. The event was family friendly and small gifts (Hot Wheels cars and plush toys) were handed out to the children at the party. (They were also popular with some adults!) Like last year, the jazz band set up a wonderful atmosphere with their music, and the children were very excited to be able to try the instruments during their break. The party was a great success and more than 140 people in total participated to the event. This was certainly the biggest FelCom Holiday Party ever.

We would like to congratulate Tamara James for winning the first prize raffle of \$25 gift certificate for BlackFinn and Christopher Bachran for the second prize raffle of \$10 gift certificate for StarBucks.

FelCom and GSC would like to thank everyone who attended the event and made this party such a success (so much that we ran out of food and beverages around 9 PM!) We're surely going to organize an even bigger party next year!



Happy New Year!